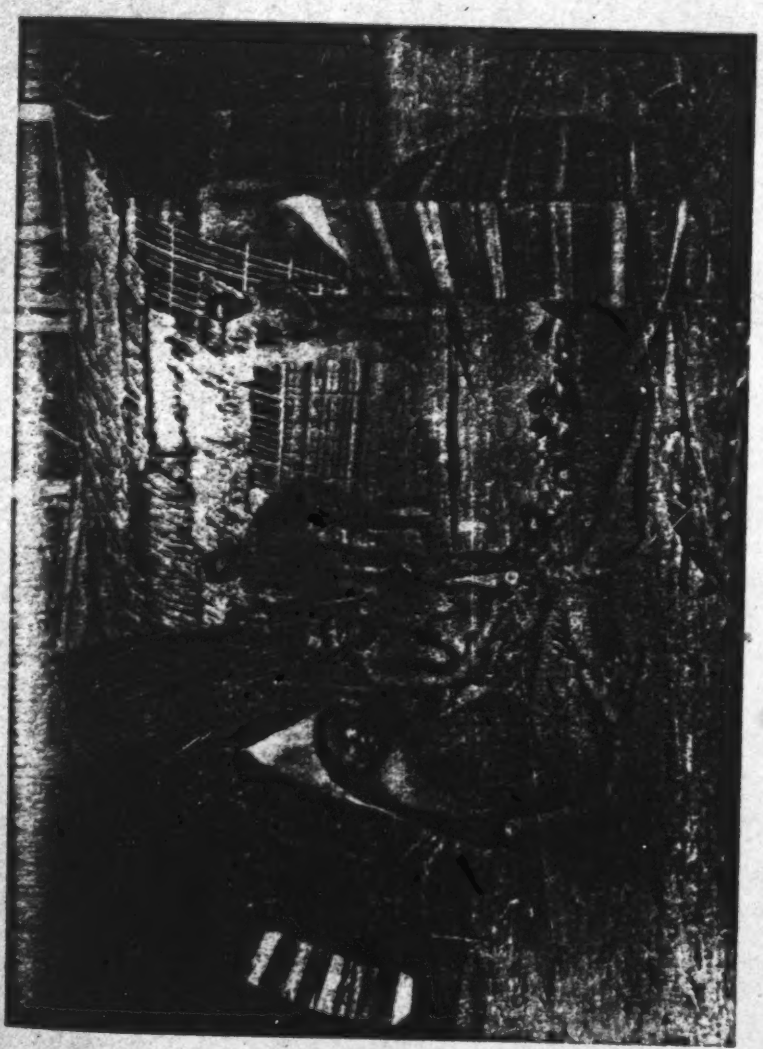
1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 4



342
291
142
516

AT THE *BABOTS*, KURTATCHI

[facing p. 22]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

is not told anything about the betrothal. It is usual for the father of a boy who is *tsunaun* to choose for his son's first wife a girl who is his equal in rank, but there appears to be no hard and fast rule on the subject. A *tsunaun* girl may be betrothed to a commoner if her mother agrees, but this is somewhat unusual, as it involves the handing over, at a later stage in the negotiations, of a larger amount of ceremonial currency than a commoner is likely to have at his disposal.

At the time arranged the boy's mother goes to the girl's village, taking with her some leaves of the plant called *unun*, which were used for women's girdles before they possessed loin-cloths, and the variegated leaves of *iag* (*Coleus Blumei var.*). This plant is grown along with taro in the gardens and is supposed to ensure a good crop, so it is possible that the use of its leaves in betrothal may have some reference to the bride's future fertility, but my informants did not say so. It is used also in the ceremony for a pregnant woman (see p. 142). The boy's mother decorates the girl with these leaves, putting some round her neck and some round her waist. The two mothers chew the betel-mixture together. Except for this, nothing is eaten at this part of the proceedings, and there is no dancing. Word goes round to all the villages that the girl is betrothed, so that no one else will try to get her. But she still remains with her mother, and does not go near the boy's village as yet.

When she is about seven or eight ('as big as Kiram's wife Buin', who is about that age), the boy's mother goes to the girl's village and paints the girl's hair with *oin*. If the boy's mother is dead his mother's sister undertakes this duty. When she has finished painting the girl's hair, she may, if she wishes, take the girl home with her. She first chews the betel-mixture with the girl's mother, and fixes a time for her to come and visit her daughter. The girl then accompanies her future mother-in-law home, and the boy now sees his bride for the first time. This first meeting is called *komau*. The girl goes inside the boy's mother's hut, but she stays near the woman's entrance, and does not go near his bed (if he has not yet put on the *api* and is therefore still sleeping there). She must not speak to the boy; the two are very shy with one another.

After three or four days agreed upon have passed, the girl's mother comes to the boy's village, accompanied by other women from her own village. Any woman who wishes may join in this

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 6

583
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436
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854

a. DISPLAYING CEREMONIAL CURRENCY FOR A BRIDE
b. NEARER VIEW OF THE CURRENCY DISPLAYED

[FACING p. 86]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 7

142
417

b. TAKON, WIFE OF WASE

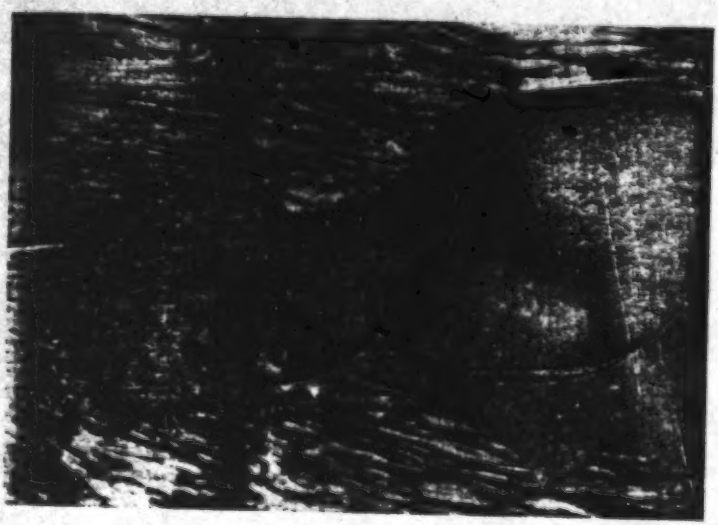
291
301

a. TAGOAL COMING TO VISIT HER HUSBAND'S PEOPLE

[Facing p. 87]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 9



A NEWLY MARRIED PAIR: KAKARI AND MUBEN

142
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[Facing p. 102]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

839 hurry up and make a new house? Who is it you want to sleep with?'
539 She said: 'What are you talking about? I haven't got a husband.' 'I think some man is having intercourse with you in the bush.' 'No, that is not so.' Then she went to look at the banana to see whether it had grown big yet, and she said: 'Why have you not grown big?' Then she went back to the village, and stayed there for awhile.

Another day she went to the bush again, and a little girl went behind her, and heard her talking to the bush banana. The little girl thought she was talking to a man. Then she saw it was only a banana. So she went back to the village, and told the father of the woman: 'Your daughter is having an affair with a banana, that's all.' Then her father broke up the house, and cut the thatch of the roof into pieces, and broke up the walls. He was angry with his daughter because she was in love with a banana.

839 I once saw a woman take the flower of a banana palm and hold it to her breast, pretending to give it suck. She said: 'This is my child.' She had been divorced, had not remarried, and was childless.

CLOTHING AND SHAME

● 291 Before the advent of the whites, men wore no clothing of any kind, not even a pubic leaf. Women wore a waist string of thin fibre, from which a bunch of leaves depended in front, scarcely covering their genitals, and providing but scanty concealment except from a direct frontal view. These conditions still obtain in the mountain districts of central Bougainville.

291 At the present time, the Government expects all the natives
177 under control to wear a loin-cloth. This is further stressed by the missionaries, who require that even the smallest infants shall be thus attired if brought to religious services. Otherwise, little children of both sexes generally go naked, though it is becoming increasingly common to dress them in loin-cloths also. The garment, known by the pidgin-English term *laplap*, consists of a length of cloth passed once round the waist, with the ends folded over and tucked in. Great care is taken to adjust it correctly and to keep it in position. It usually falls to the knees, but may be longer or shorter. The older men and women often discard their loin-cloths when working hard or when they are ill. The women, however, are seldom seen entirely naked, but retain a bit of rag depending in front, or the old-time bunch of leaves. The younger people are never without their laplaps, even bathing in the sea thus clad. The garment is retained at night.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 13

854
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[276]

a b

METHODS OF CARRYING BABIES: a SLING, b ON HIP

[Facing p. 171]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 14

857
481
342
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a. CHILDREN PLAYING: KURTATCHI

481
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857

b. DIVING: AT PETATS

[Facing p. 174]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 18

854
482
142
● 291

b. CHILD BEING CARRIED ON PACK

a. WANIAS AND HIS GRANDMOTHER MATÉV

[facing p. 193]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

621 because his father was living at Ruri when the *wapi* ceremony was held there.

881 With the village of Kurtatchi are associated those of Bebekes, Tabut, Tensoa, Wantoa, Munlus, Baniata, Bonona, Musang, Soringar, and Togaragar. These are all situated on the strip of coast between Kurtatchi and Buka Passage, covering a length of perhaps six or seven miles of it. The six hamlets comprising the village of Ruri, next to Kurtatchi on the eastern side, about three to four miles away, form a group of their own, and the string of villages still farther east, between Ruri and the island of Tiop at the north-eastern corner of Bougainville, are also a group by themselves. Another consists of the villages on the foot-hills to the south of Soraken Bay, but not including those of the Kunua district still farther to the south, which again form a separate group. I had no opportunity of ascertaining how far this custom continues beyond the Kunua district on the western side of Bougainville. On the eastern side it extends beyond the north-eastern corner for a few miles only, I believe.

291 The hats are not worn on Buka or on any of its adjacent islands,
881 but a ceremony having some features similar to the *wapi* ceremony
184 takes place at intervals. It has been witnessed and described by Mr. Gordon Thomas (1931, p. 226 ff.). I could obtain no more than the most meagre scraps of information about it from the people of Petats. At Lontis, on the north-west coast of Buka, I was told that the boys put on the hat for one month, and stay in the bush while wearing it; the day after the month is finished they come back to the village and the hats are burnt at night, in secret. The following account was obtained at Kurtatchi, and applies to all the groups described in the previous paragraph.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE *WAPI* CEREMONY

881 As both the *wapi* ceremonies held during my residence took place at a distance, I was not able to witness the preparations that were made for them. Everything connected with the *wapi* ceremony is kept very secret from the women, but men and boys were willing enough to tell me about these matters when there were no women within earshot. The listeners were quick to criticize or prompt the narrator, and as accounts received in different villages tally in essentials, I think the details are reliable, though there may be omissions, either inadvertent or intentional.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

A SECOND *WAPI* CEREMONY

881 Towards the end of my residence at Kurtatchi I had another
574 opportunity of seeing the *wapi* ceremony, performed by the group
621 of villages in the mountains behind the north-eastern corner of the island. The people of Kurtatchi were invited as guests, and Pinari made no objection to my accompanying them. Our party consisted of eight men, five of the bigger *upi* boys, and myself. The journey was considered too long for the smaller boys. We spent the night at Baniu. Next day we were joined by parties of men and boys from several coast villages and one from the hills.
[578] The hill-men were regarded with great suspicion by the coast people, who took care to keep well behind them. We walked to the accompaniment of much shouting and yelling and blowing
[411] of conch-shells. All were armed, with bows and arrows, knives, axes or spears; those who had no weapons cut themselves lengths of bamboo to serve as spears. Pinari cut one for me, saying that he was afraid the people of the mountains would be angry with him for having brought a woman, so I had better be a man for the occasion. He enjoined me to keep close to him and to do exactly as he did. Some time after passing through Raua Plantation we turned inland.

We were quite a large party when, after scrambling up a steep and slippery hill-side, we finally reached the appointed spot, a cleared place in the heart of the forest. We arrived in the prescribed manner, in a rush, brandishing our weapons, sounding conch-shells, and yelling at the tops of our voices, and were met by a similar party of those who had arrived before us, with the usual mock combat. There were a few moments of great excitement, the crowd now numbering several hundred.

184 The mountain people, as they appeared at this ceremony,
177 certainly were a wild-looking lot. They have not adopted the
291 fashion of wearing a loin-cloth, now almost universal along the coast, and many of them had not even the usual belt of string or leaves. Nearly all, old and young, had their faces painted in
184 weird patterns of red and white; some had a smear of colour all round their eyes, some a series of white lines drawn obliquely
302 across their cheeks, some had patterns carried out in dots. Several
291 wore head-dresses made of feathers. The adolescent boys belonging to this group had been through the *watawutf* ceremony, and so were permitted to remove their *upi*, and most of them had done

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 26

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FEMALE *URAR* FIGURE AT *WAPI* CEREMONY

[facing p. 213]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

so. Their hair fell about their shoulders in long matted strands, reaching, in many cases, below their waists. Some had fixed a piece of wood, about three feet long, across their locks at the level of their shoulders, and fastened their hair to it in spread-eagle fashion, twisting all sorts of leaves and creepers into it.

After a great deal of rushing about and shouting, the *urar* figures were brought out, mounted, as on the previous occasion, on men's shoulders. First came a male figure, wearing a giant *upi* (Pl. 25), then a woman's figure, representing his wife, both covered with hair cut from previous *upi*-wearers. In contrast to the female figure at the ceremony previously described, this one was furnished with female breasts (Pl. 26). There were four other *urar* figures, with slightly differing heads. One of these was taken away to show to the women from a distance, to the accompaniment of the whirr of two bull-roarers. Then the novices were brought out; only fifteen of them this time. Their heads were bare; there were none of the conical hats such as had been worn by the novices at the other performance. They were grouped together with their *amro* round them, and the *urar* figures were made to bend over them, gesticulating wildly, and going through the motions of killing them, two axes being knocked together to imitate the noise of the blows. This was done once and for all, to all the novices *en bloc*; there was no dramatic presentation of the boys one by one as on the former occasion. They were then laid out on the ground for dead, and covered with leaves. Then the female *urar* came and gesticulated over them, bringing them to life again. By this time the light was failing, and as there was much crowding and pushing on the part of the spectators, it was difficult to see clearly just what was done. I was told later that the female *urar* was supposed to give the boys her urine to drink, by pouring it over them, but that it was not really urine, only water. All the boys got up and stood in a group. There had been a great deal of muddle and delay in the earlier part of the day, and now darkness was upon us before the ceremony was finished. It was therefore decided to defer the putting on of the new *upi* till the next day, when it would be done at dawn, without further ritual, they told me. Nothing would have induced my party to stay in the mountains all night, so I was reluctantly obliged to return with them, without seeing this.

This performance of the *wapi* ceremony was not nearly so

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

VII

ADOLESCENT GIRLS

GIRL'S LIFE DURING ADOLESCENCE

882 291 [602] THERE is no sharp break in the life of a girl, corresponding to that which faces a boy when he puts on the *npi*.[1] No ceremony imposes upon her any sudden burden of taboos and regulations. There seems to be no hard-and-fast rule as regards the age at which she begins wearing the woman's hood. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system of relationships, even quite small girls are liable to have relatives who come under the term *waris* (son-in-law), from whose sight they are technically supposed to shield themselves by means of the hood. Most little girls possess one, and wear it on ceremonial occasions. But, in practice, the rule of avoidance is rigidly enforced only between the woman and the husband of her own daughter, or of her sister's daughter, after the final marriage ceremony, so that it does not bear heavily upon a girl during her adolescence. Similarly, so far as I could learn, there was never any great stress laid on the time of putting on the girdle and bunch of leaves which was the only wear of the women prior to the adoption of the loin-cloth. A girl wore this girdle as a matter of course after she had experienced her first menstrual flux, but could begin earlier if she liked. But it may be that a custom long fallen into disuse may have been forgotten by, or even unknown to, those with whom I discussed this question. Nowadays, when even quite tiny children are often to be seen wearing loin-cloths, it seems to be a matter of their parents' or their own personal preference.

882 591 A girl's first ordeal comes when she must go for the first time to stay with her prospective husband's people, almost invariably in another, if perhaps not always far distant, village. This takes place long before she arrives at the age of puberty. After the first, which, as one would expect, seems always to be difficult, most girls, I think, regard these visits with complaisance, or at worst with indifference, though perhaps seldom with any degree of positive pleasure. The tenor of their lives runs in much the same grooves as before; they work in the gardens, fetch firewood and water, and

[1] [erratum, should be upi. – Powdyth] [p. 248]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935 .
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 32

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881
291

FIGURE USED AT GIRL'S PUBERTY CEREMONY

[facing p. 268]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

The work was done very rapidly and was well co-ordinated, so that there was no confusion, although there was a large number of people working in close juxtaposition. Though it was long after noon when the planting started the whole area was covered before sunset, except a few corners where there were not enough stalks to go round. These were finished subsequently, without further ceremony. Almost all the able-bodied people of the village were present, both men and women, with the exception of the boys wearing the *upi*. They were not allowed to come to the garden on that day, but were obliged to stay in or near the village.

The women wore no head covering. They are not allowed to wear their pandanus leaf hoods on this occasion. If any one has a *waris* relative present she must make a hood out of banana leaves. I could get no explanation of this rule against the wearing of the hood, usually very much in evidence on all ceremonial occasions, frequently worn even when custom does not require it, to protect the head when exposed to the heat of the sun, as these women were all this day.

Every one left the garden as soon as the planting was finished. It was not visited again for the next five days. After that work was resumed upon it, the remaining patches were cleared and the odd corners filled.

There was no *kōma* on the evening of the ceremony, and all next day every one stayed about the place doing nothing. They said they were tired after the hard work of planting. There was a *kōma* that evening, especially for the taro garden, but it did not go on all night.

I could get no information as to how long it would be before this taro was ready for use. They seem to judge only by looking at it.

On August 23, 1930, I saw another performance of this ceremony, on the occasion of the planting of a taro garden belonging to the village of Tabut. Although the general course of the proceedings was similar, the whole thing was much less elaborate and carried out with less dramatic effect. The principal performer chewed some roots with areca-nut and the leaves—but not the fruit, which is the usual accompaniment of areca-nut—of the betel-pepper, and touched the heaps of taro stalks with this mixture, which he spat into the palms of his hands (Pl. 39*b*). He did not call upon any *urar*. I inquired later as to this omission and was told that some people did so and some did not, but that if it had

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 41

789

a. RAIN-MAKING APPARATUS

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482

b. A SUCCESSFUL 'POSSUM HUNTER

[Facing p. 314]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 49

501
531
296
292
231

BOY WITH PADDLE
[facing P. 365]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 57

291
292
342
372

MAKING FIRE BY THE STICK AND GROOVE METHOD

[facing p. 394]

those of normal people, are forbidden territory to other members of the tribe, and only the wives are an exception to this rule. The men have the assembly house as a common meeting place; neighborly visits in our sense of the word are not customary in the Solomon Islands. As a privileged person, I have occasionally been allowed to enter the chieftains' houses. After your eye has become accustomed to the darkness of the room, you notice the women on the raised beds; part of them are busy caring for the children, others sew strips of pandanus leaves together, prepare fish nets, etc. At most, the favorite wife of the chieftain is unoccupied, and a number of the other wives are always present to serve her exclusively. It is often quite amusing to see how this sultana tyrannizes not only her fellow wives, but also her husband and wields over him a strict petticoat regime. Despite the fact that the men seem to pay little attention to their wives outside, they seem to be very obedient within their own four walls.

[19] Clothing and Ornaments

In very few cases can one speak of clothing in our sense of the word. Gay-colored cotton materials used as loin cloths are customary for men as well as for women in many places nowadays, but there are large areas where they are not yet in use. At most belts and aprons hanging down from them come into consideration there.

Belts are worn extensively. They sometimes consist solely of a narrow string fastened firmly around the waist. Young men occasionally use as belts the money strings made of round shell disks and called biruan (see below). The most desired belt (mávesi in Buka), however, consists of braid work such as I shall describe under bracelets; some of these are ten centimeters wide and are executed in a carefully worked pattern in black, yellow and red. More frequently long strips of red-dyed rattan are worn (tóno in Buka). These strips are 5 to 10 millimeters wide and 2 to 8 meters long, dyed a pretty red, and engraved with rectangular figures and zigzag lines. These strips are placed closely around the waist and often drawn extremely tightly. I noticed this belt especially on young dandies, now and then also on older men, but never on women. Both sexes, on the other hand, occasionally wear a belt of pandanus leaves; the leaves are rolled up and natural-colored strands are woven with black or red dyed strands to form a cord that is

frequently finger thick; it is simply knotted in back. In Buka and north Bougainville the women stick a bundle of dried foliage under this belt so that the genitals are concealed. Young girls as a rule do without even this clothing. Over this first belt frequently a broader belt smeared red with ochre is placed; it is likewise called mâvesi. It consists of strips of rattan laid next to each other, which are tied to each other with thin strands of thread in such a way that the rattan strips form the warp for the very carefully executed weaving. These belts are 5 to 8 centimeters wide; they are worn only by old and married women. In Taboroi on the east coast of Bougainville the married women wear large dried leaves of a fan palm, whose outer edge is embroidered with a delicate and broad pattern of dark fiber material; this apron is pressed firmly against the front part of the body with one hand when the wearer is walking or sitting. In a village inland from Taboroi I saw a very pretty genital apron on some women. It was made of fine fibers dyed red; a number of these fibers of eighty centimeters length were woven in the center -- for about ten centimeters of their length -- to form a cord of about the thickness of a pencil, and several of these strands were attached lengthwise to one another. The skirt is shoved underneath the belt and the woven part is then folded over the top. A few women were wearing over this genital skirt an even broader belt made of an approximately ten centimeter wide plant material (pandanus?); this was woven through with dark red fibers and wound several times around the waist.

Among the various clothing objects one must also name the umbrellas and parasols made of strips of pandanus leaves, which are used in the Bougainville Strait as well as in Buka. The rectangle of 100 x 60 centimeters which is made out of pandanus strips sewn together is folded lengthwise and sewed together at one end; to use it one places the upper sewed end over the head and lets the remaining part fall down across the back. This article of clothing is completely rain repellent. Sometimes it is made of natural-colored and red-dyed strips, and sometimes the edges or even the whole thing is worked with pretty patterns.

Jewelry is not extensively used. Natives like those of the northern Solomon Islands, who always have their weapons at hand and expend the greatest care on them, do not have a highly developed sense for bodily decoration. Gay-colored blossoms and foliage are occasionally used in the dances; a red hibiscus blossom in the black woolly hair is a favorite ornament of the young dandies. In addition, however,

3: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1932
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

the house. When you want to come back, beat on the root of a tree and I shall hear you and put on my *takop*." (The *takop* is the hood worn by the women in accordance with the rule of avoidance which forbids them to see or be seen by their sons-in-law.)

Then she took a knife and cut a piece of her flesh and cooked it. Then she chewed areca nut and spat the juice about. When her son-in-law and his wife came back she fooled them. They asked: "Who has been chewing areca nut here?" She said: "Some people who came to bring us a pig." She gave the two of them pieces of meat. The couple ate the flesh of their relative.

They went again to work, the two of them. They talked to their child, they made him lie down in the roof under a food-basket. Tchinaleke took off her *takop*, and the child saw her bones and her flesh. He was afraid, and he urinated. It dripped down and wetted Tchinaleke's bones. She thought it was water, that the others had hidden. Her flesh gave her pain. Then the child cried out, from his place in the rafters, he was afraid of Tchinaleke, she was like a skeleton.

The man and his wife came back, they asked the child: "Didn't you see them? Didn't you see the people who brought a pig to-day?" The child said to them: "There isn't any pig. Tchinaleke is fooling you both. She cuts her flesh and cooks it, and makes you think it is pig. You are eating the flesh of Tchinaleke." Then they said to Tchinaleke: "You have been fooling us about your flesh." Tchinaleke was very angry, she chased them away, they ran away. Tchinaleke wanted to beat them. They ran away, they climbed up a *tchiniv* (tall slender tree used for making dug-out canoes, the word is also used for "canoe"). Tchinaleke went to climb up behind them, she wanted to beat them. They teased her, they said: "You climb up a *karao*." (A plant of the ficus tribe, which has runners dropping straight to the ground from the branches of trees.)

535 The Buka dance or *guma* is an uninteresting spectacle. Unlike other Melanesian dances there is very little action and the [533] accompanying singing is but a constant repetition of " O-a-o-a " in as many keys as the human voice is capable of rendering. The men walk slowly around in a circle while the women, standing some ten yards away, advance to the edge of the circle from time to time and in pairs bend their bodies backwards and forwards, or in threes and fours skip sideways to and fro. From a distance the singing is often harmonious, but when heard at close quarters it is both ear-splitting and appalling to a musical listener.

[534] The singing is accompanied by the beating of the hollowed-out 202 wooden drums (*tui*) with series of short staccato raps from the soft-nosed beaters. These *tui* can be heard for many miles when weather conditions are favourable and are used extensively for signalling. Some of the Buka districts have elaborate *tui* codes, and are able to send detailed messages from village to village. Among the more [763] simplified signals is that denoting a death and is made by ten long beats, pause, three short, pause, three short, pause, five short, pause, five short, pause, and ten long. When a man is annoyed over something (his wife has failed to cook the taro, or a pig has died) and he wishes to " tell the world " he raps out ten long beats, a pause, then another ten long beats. The arrival of a stranger in a village is denoted by three long beats, pause, followed by three series of seven short beats interspersed with pauses. The general call to assemble in a village is three series of three shorts and one long beat.

303 The men usually wear their hair long and combed upright. [946] The hair of a woman is close-cropped, except when she has given birth to a child and then it is allowed to grow long until the child is able to crawl about. The women wear a hood made from pandanus 291 leaves sewn horizontally together, with every other leaf dyed red 386 with the root of a bush. This custom is to prevent certain of their male relatives from seeing their hair, which is taboo. A loin cloth 291 of red or coloured print serves as the general garment for both sexes. 177 A few years ago the women wore a small grass *tahu*, and in former days the men wore no covering.

: Thomas U-5 (no date) 1931 ON6 Buka ON6
Pororan

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534

CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS OF THE NATIVES OF BUKA. PLATE I.
Tui *and* King *with Beaters.*

[p.230(A)]